

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY,

Washington, DC, May 6, 2010.

Hon. GEORGE MILLER,

Chairman, Committee on Education and Labor, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN MILLER: Thank you for your May 5, 2010 letter regarding H.R. 5116, the America COMPETES Reauthorization Act of 2010. Your support for this legislation and your assistance in ensuring its timely consideration are greatly appreciated.

I agree that provisions in the bill are within the jurisdiction of the Committee on Education and Labor. I acknowledge that by waiving rights to further consideration of H.R. 5116, your Committee is not relinquishing its jurisdiction and I will fully support your request to be represented in a House-Senate conference on those provisions over which the Committee on Education and Labor has jurisdiction in H.R. 5116, or similar legislation. A copy of our letters will be placed in the legislative report and the Congressional Record during consideration of the bill on the House floor.

I value your cooperation and look forward to working with you as we move ahead with this important legislation.

Sincerely,

BART GORDON,
Chairman.

TRIBUTE TO TIM RUSSELL, BALDWIN COUNTY, ALABAMA PROBATE JUDGE

HON. JO BONNER

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 18, 2010

Mr. BONNER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize a distinguished public servant from my home state, a man who has who has served as Mayor of the City of Foley, Revenue Commissioner for the State of Alabama and now, has returned to his beloved home county to assume the responsibilities as Baldwin County's new Probate Judge, the Honorable Tim Russell.

On April 16, Governor Bob Riley appointed Commissioner Russell to be the next Probate Judge of Baldwin County. Tim's selection was an outstanding choice.

As an Army Captain during the Vietnam War, Tim demonstrated leadership and loyalty to his country—vital qualities he still possesses. He was awarded the Army Commendation Medal for his military service.

As a businessman, Tim led Baldwin Mutual Insurance Company as president, while also taking the mantle of public service in his home town. He was elected mayor of Foley in 1996 and was re-elected twice, serving until 2006.

On March 3, 2008, Governor Bob Riley appointed Tim Russell as Alabama Revenue Commissioner. In this statewide position, Tim was responsible for the operation and management of the state's revenue collections, which exceed \$8 billion annually. And as a key member of Governor Riley's cabinet, Tim used his experience in both business and public life to help advance the governor's agenda of always putting Alabama first. Throughout his 8 years in office, Governor Riley has always prided himself on assembling a truly world-class Cabinet and Tim Russell is one of the reasons why this statement was so true.

Tim's able stewardship of this major state agency made him the logical choice to replace

former Baldwin County Probate Judge Adrian Jones, who recently retired to spend more time with his family. Tim officially took office on May 3, 2010.

Madam Speaker, Judge Russell has held numerous posts in many community organizations, including the South Baldwin Chamber of Commerce, the South Baldwin United Way, the Foley Rotary Club, and the Foley Library Board, to name just a few.

Tim has been the epitome of a servant leader and he and his wife, Sandy, are great friends, as well, to Janee and me. With this latest responsibility, I am confident that Judge Russell will continue to make his family, his friends and all of South Alabama extremely proud.

I congratulate Tim on his appointment and wish him and his family continued success and much happiness.

COBRA HEALTH BENEFITS EXTENSION ACT OF 2010

HON. SUSAN A. DAVIS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 18, 2010

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Madam Speaker, I rise today on behalf of those relying on COBRA benefits for health coverage.

Millions of Americans have lost their jobs since the recession began in 2007. Unfortunately, when you lose your job, you generally lose your health insurance. For those with a preexisting condition or ongoing health problem, this common scenario can leave them with no health insurance and often no way to get coverage.

Section 113 of the House version of the health care reform bill gave unemployed Americans the option of staying on their COBRA insurance beyond the typical 18-month eligibility period. The provision was designed as a stopgap measure to prevent more people from becoming uninsured.

The Senate bill did not include similar provisions extending COBRA. With California's high unemployment rates, my office has received calls from San Diegans on the verge of losing their COBRA benefits with nowhere to turn for health insurance.

We know that COBRA coverage is not perfect. Premiums are generally higher because employers are no longer paying a portion of the cost. However, especially for those with significant health care costs, COBRA coverage is extremely valuable.

In fact, the average medical expenses for a patient with diabetes cost \$13,000 per year, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, CDC. The average cost of treating breast cancer rose to nearly \$21,000 and prostate cancer to over \$41,000 in 2008, according to the National Cancer Institute.

Can you imagine facing these types of health care costs without any type of insurance? Because of the high unemployment rates, I fear many Americans are close to losing their COBRA eligibility.

I'm proud to introduce the COBRA Health Benefits Extension Act of 2010 with Chairman GEORGE MILLER, Congressman ROBERT ANDREWS, and Congressman JOE COURTNEY to help Americans keep their health insurance. Those on COBRA can stay with their cov-

erage beyond standard eligibility periods until they find a new job providing insurance or until health insurance exchanges are available in 2014. They can also drop their COBRA coverage and enter a government-sponsored high-risk pool if they so choose. This legislation provides a bridge to those at risk of losing their health coverage so they do not have to go without insurance.

Madam Speaker, thank you very much for your efforts to make health coverage accessible and affordable.

THE DEEPWATER HORIZON TRAGEDY

HON. STEVE COHEN

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 18, 2010

Mr. COHEN. Madam Speaker, nearly 1 month after the Deepwater Horizon oil spill began on April 20, oil continues to flow from the well, poisoning the Gulf and destroying the environment. The Deepwater Horizon Rig activities were considered by all to be a low risk drilling exploration. Such a classification sends chills up my spine given the countless riskier drilling ventures occurring along the coasts of this great Nation.

While millions of Americans tune into the news to watch the destruction of the Gulf Coast, the environment, and the economy of that area, I think of the thoughtless, baseless, and cavalier Republican energy chants "Drill Baby Drill." It echoes in the ears of the American public and anybody who cares about the Gulf Coast. Drill Baby Drill—what a farfetched plan given that the U.S. contains 2.2 percent of world oil reserves and consumes 25.9 percent of the world's oil consumption. You do not have to be a math scholar or a Nobel Prize economist to see the flaws of this strategy.

We need to find alternative forms of energy. We must use America's great resource and brainpower to harness the sun and to harness the wind. We must find new ways to help us with our problems of energy which will reduce our dependence on fossil fuels, protect our environment, and safeguard the flora and fauna.

We will never be able to drill our way to energy independence. Rather than invoking our brawn, we must utilize our brains and innovate, as Americans have done for generations. Rather than throwing our limited Federal dollars at the feet of oil giants, let's invest in American ingenuity and create an American clean energy economy. Rather than sucking out every last drop of oil and coal beneath the earth's surface destroying the air we breathe and water we drink, let's utilize renewable energy sources like solar and wind that enhance our environment.

The choice is clear—we can drill our way further into environmental destruction and oil dependence, or we can create a new energy economy that creates millions of jobs and protects the environment for future generations.

Recently I introduced legislation that will do just that—the 10 Million Solar Roofs and 10 Million Gallons of Solar Water Heating Act. This legislation will create an estimated 1.35 million direct and indirect jobs, lower energy costs, strengthen the economy, and put America on the path to energy independence.